

# Building Blocks for Effective Housing Elements

## Adequate Sites Inventory and Analysis Zoning For a Variety of Housing Types

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*Government Code Section 65583 requires the housing element to shall identify adequate sites for a variety of housing types including multifamily rental housing, factory-built housing, mobilehomes, housing for agricultural employees, supportive housing, single-room occupancy units, emergency shelters, and transitional housing.*

Providing development opportunities for a variety of housing types will promote diversity in housing price, style and size, and contributes to neighborhood stability by offering more affordable and move-up homes and accommodating a diverse income mix.

### I. REQUISITE ANALYSIS

A housing element must demonstrate the availability of sites, with appropriate zoning, that will encourage and facilitate a variety of housing types, including multifamily rental housing, factory built housing, mobilehomes, housing for agricultural employees, emergency shelters and transitional housing. At minimum, the analysis must:

1. Identify zoning districts where these housing types are permitted.
2. Analyze how development standards and processing requirements facilitate development.

### **Farmworker Housing**

The element must quantify farmworker populations and define specific characteristics (e.g., seasonal, single males/females, families). Once the community has an understanding of the farmworker population and their housing needs, it must ensure that appropriate housing types can be made available. The element must:

Identify sites/zones that can accommodate housing for farmworkers. The element should demonstrate the adequacy of identified sites/zones to accommodate the identified need for farmworkers (see screen on Special Housing Needs for Farmworkers).

- Include an analysis that demonstrates the local government's zoning, development standards and processing requirements encourage and facilitate all types of housing for farmworkers (i.e., multifamily, single room occupancy, second units, manufactured homes, migrant centers, etc.).

If sufficient sites/zones for housing for farmworkers are not identified, the element must include a program to provide sites/zones where housing for farmworkers will be allowed “by-right”.

The element should also ensure that local zoning, development standards and permitting processes comply with Health and Safety Code Section 17021.5 and 17021.6 which requires that “any employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household shall be deemed an agricultural land use designation. For the purpose of all local ordinances, employee housing shall not be deemed a use that implies that the employee housing is an activity that differs in any other way from an agricultural use. No conditional use permit, zoning variance, or other zoning clearance shall be required of this employee housing that is not required of any other agricultural activity in the same zone. The permitted occupancy in employee housing in an agricultural zone shall include agricultural employees who do not work on the property where the employee housing is located.

### **Mobilehomes and Factory-Built Housing**

Manufactured and factory-built housing can be integral parts of the solution for addressing housing needs. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65852.3 the siting and permit process for manufactured housing should be regulated in the same manner as a conventional or stick-built structure. Specifically, Government Code Section 65852.3(a) requires that with the exception of architectural requirements a local government, including charter cities, shall only subject manufactured homes (mobilehomes) to the same development standards to which a conventional single-family residential dwelling on the same lot would be subject, including, but not limited to, building setback standards, side and rear yard requirements, standards for enclosures, access, and vehicle parking, aesthetic requirements, and minimum square footage requirements.

The housing element must describe the siting and permit process for manufactured (mobilehomes) and factory-built housing and demonstrate how the community has identified zoning and development standards that will provide opportunities for these housing types. For more information on manufactured housing licensing requirements, regulations, and design standards see HCD’s website at <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/mhp/>.

### **Multifamily Rental Housing**

The element should demonstrate the adequacy of zoning and development standards that will allow and encourage multifamily rental housing opportunities. The analysis should identify zones permitting multifamily rental development and evaluate whether development standards and permit procedures encourage multifamily opportunities. Further, this analysis should discuss and address any policies that might impede multifamily rental opportunities and

assure sufficient and realistic opportunities for development in the planning period.

### **Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) Units**

SROs can provide a valuable form of affordable private housing for lower-income individuals, seniors, and persons with disabilities. An SRO unit usually is small, between 200 to 350 square feet. These units provide a valuable source of affordable housing and can serve as an entry point into the housing market for formerly homeless people.

Many older SROs have been lost due to deterioration, hotel conversions, and demolition. Therefore, in addition to identifying zoning and development standards that will allow and encourage the construction of new SROs, local governments should consider including program actions in their housing elements that commit to preserving and rehabilitating existing residential hotels and other buildings suitable for SROs. Other implementation actions that would encourage both the development of new SROs and the preservation of existing opportunities include:

- Zoning and permit procedures. The element could include a program action that commits the local government to amending their zoning and building codes, and permitting procedures to facilitate and encourage new SRO construction. A more streamlined entitlement process helps in providing greater predictability in the approval and development of new SROs. In terms of preservation, local governments could include programs to promote the rehabilitation of older (structurally sound) buildings located in appropriate areas, rather than demolition.
- Provide regulatory and fiscal assistance. The element could include a program action that commits the local government to providing funding sources and regulatory relief to assist non-profit developers in constructing and preserving SRO facilities.
- Implement educational programs. Include a program to outreach to neighborhood groups, stakeholders, advocates, and local businesses regarding the advantages of providing opportunities for new construction and preservation of SROs.

### **Supportive Housing**

Supportive housing is permanent rental housing linked to a range of support services designed to enable residents to maintain stable housing and lead fuller lives.

Typically, a portion of the housing is targeted to people who have risk factors such as homelessness, or health challenges such as mental illness or substance

addiction. Study after study attest to the cost effectiveness of supportive housing. Not only is it significantly less expensive than the institutional alternatives that homeless and disabled people often cycle through – including shelters, institutions and hospitals – it ends tenants’ dependence on emergency services for healthcare and treatment. The types of support services that can be provided include medical and mental health care, vocational and employment services, substance abuse treatment, childcare, and independent living skills training.

Most supportive housing is built and managed by non-profit housing developers in partnership with non-profit service providers. However, local governments, must play a proactive role in assuring support and providing necessary approvals. The housing element should identify zones that allow supportive housing development and demonstrate that zoning, local regulations (standards and the permit process) encourage and facilitate supportive housing.

Supportive housing comes in all shapes and sizes, and is designed to meet the needs of both the people to be served and the communities where it is located. It could be a renovated motel offering furnished SRO apartments; a multifamily development where tenants with disabilities live alongside other families with low-incomes; a small, more service-intensive building; or scattered-site apartments. Whatever the configuration, all of the housing allows tenants to access support services that enable them to live as independently as possible.

## **KEY IDEAS**

### **II. MODEL ANALYSES**

[Sample Analysis](#)

### **IV. LINKS**

#### **General**

[HCD: NIMBY Resources](#)

[HCD: NIMBY to YIMBY Presentation](#)

#### **Farmworker Housing:**

[HCD Bibliography on Farm Worker Issues](#)

[California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation](#)

[Housing Assistance Council](#)

[Farmworker Justice](#)

[Farmworker Housing Design](#)

[National Center for Farmworker Health](#)

### **Manufactured (Mobilehomes) and Factory-built Housing**

[HCD: Manufactured Housing and Factory Built Housing Resources](#)

[California Manufactured Housing Institute](#)

[Manufactured Housing Institute](#)

[Golden State Manufactured Home Owners League](#)

[Western Manufactured Housing Communities Association](#)

### **Single-Room Occupancy (SRO)**

[HUD: Single Room Occupancy Program](#)

[SRO Housing Corporation](#)

[Single Room Housing Assistance Corporation](#)

[National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

[National Resource Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness](#)

[Bring Los Angeles Home](#)

[City of Santa Rosa Single-Room Occupancy Ordinance](#)

### **Supportive Housing**

[Corporation for Supportive Housing](#)

[HUD's Supportive Housing Program](#)

[California Research Bureau, Addressing Long-term Homelessness, Permanent Supportive Housing](#)

[Technical Assistance Collaborative](#)

### **Affordable Housing Developers – *UNDER CONSTRUCTION***

[Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California](#)

[Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing](#)